



KYABRAM & DISTRICT HEALTH SERVICES

ABN 40 003 759 225

A Commitment to Excellence in Healthcare. ACHS Accredited.
2009 RURAL HEALTH SERVICE OF THE YEAR



3rd April, 2012.

Judge Jennifer Coate
Coroner, State of Victoria
Coroner's Court of Victoria
Level 11, 222 Exhibition Street
MELBOURNE VIC 3000

Dear Judge Coate

INQUEST INTO THE DEATH OF DAVID CRISFIELD (COURT REF: 4508/07)

On 6 February 2012 Coroner Jamieson handed down recommendations after the inquest into the death of Mr David Crisfield.

At paragraph 38 of the finding, Coroner Jamieson recommended that:

Kyabram & District Health Services review and revise its policy and procedures on the reporting and escalation of issues/concerns that nursing staff have in their dealings with attending medical officers and that the revised policy and procedure outline alternative means of addressing the particular reported issue/concern and include a process for reporting back to the staff member the action taken in response to the reported issue/concern.

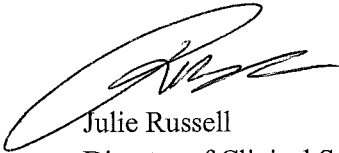
Kyabram & District Health Services accepts the recommendation as handed down. It is currently taking steps to develop policies regarding communication between staff members and the escalation of concerns regarding deteriorating patients. In particular, Kyabram & District Health Services is currently developing:

- 1 A communication plan for the rollout of a standardised approach to communication in any information handover situation, including from doctor to doctor, nurse to nurse, nurse to doctor, or doctor to allied health professional. This will help eliminate any hierarchical barriers to information flow between different staff members at the hospital.
- 2 An education plan for the rollout of the above program.
- 3 A clinical escalation policy regarding, among other situations, where concerns exist about a general practitioner's medical management of, or refusal to examine, a deteriorating patient. In such circumstances the Nurse in Charge is to escalate the matter to either the Director of Clinical Services (DCS) during business hours or the After Hours Supervisor (AHS) after hours. The DCS or AHS are then to determine whether further action, such as intervention by the Director of Medical Services, is required.
- 4 A policy regarding the recognition and management of a deteriorating patient. This will likely include the implementation and maintenance of an approved standard observation chart and incorporating the calling criteria for Clinical Review and Rapid Response to all clinical areas of the hospital.

5 A performance measure for recognising a deteriorating patient.

Kyabram & District Health Services intends that these policies, when completed, will comprehensively respond to needs arising in the hospital's everyday operation as well as the specific concerns identified by Coroner Jamieson.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Julie Russell', written in a cursive style.

Julie Russell
Director of Clinical Services
Kyabram & District Health Services